

VZCZCXYZ0001
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHRB #0019 0081810
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 081810Z JAN 08
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7984

UNCLAS RABAT 000019

SIPDIS

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ASCH](#) [AMGT](#) [MO](#)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR,S JANUARY 3 MEETING WITH FOREIGN
MINISTER ON THE STATUS OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOLS

¶1. (U) In a wide-ranging meeting on January 3, the Ambassador discussed the status of the American schools in Morocco with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Taieb Fassi Fihri and Director of American Affairs Abdallah Salah Eddine Tazi. The Ambassador noted that the status and tax situation of the schools remained a great concern. Expressing surprise, Fassi Fihri said that he thought the problem had been resolved after their exchange of telephone calls in December. The Ambassador responded that nothing has been resolved by the tax authorities, seizure of more than half of the Casablanca American School,s (CAS,s) liquid assets. The Rabat American School (RAS), which does not possess anything like CAS,s reserves, does not yet know how much it may need to pay. The Ambassador warned that we must move beyond our unwritten agreement and beyond a situation in which the schools are being held hostage because more teachers will choose not to renew their contracts; parents will grow concerned; tuition will rise; and the schools will cease to be viable.

¶2. (SBU) Somewhat defensive, Fassi Fihri said the USG had refused an agreement for a long time. However, he agreed to speak with the Ministers of National Education and Finance to move ahead with a Moroccan coordinated reaction to our August proposal. He further committed to manage the issue in a way that would preserve the schools while securing tax revenue from them.

Visit Embassy Rabat's Classified Website;
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/rabat>

Riley